

NOMINATION OF RICHARD A. JONES TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Richard A. Jones, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Richard A. Jones, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington?

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF SHARION AYCOCK TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Sharion Aycock, of Mississippi, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Mississippi.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Sharion Aycock, of Mississippi, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Mississippi?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and are laid on the table. Under the previous order, the President will be notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF R. LYLE LAVERTY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first, I want those in the White House and Secretary Kempthorne's office who are watching to know I have done my best to clear a man by the name of R. Lyle Laverty, whom Secretary Kempthorne badly needs, he says, and I believe that. But I have been unable to do that. We have a Member on our side with whom I have worked all afternoon. We thought we had it done once, and it did not work out. I am confident, though, it will work out as soon as we get back.

So I hope Secretary Kempthorne recognizes we will do what we can on the Monday or Tuesday we get back to see if we can clear this. It had not been cleared on the Republican side, but I am sure that is not standing in the way. I think standing in the way is one of my Senators. We are doing our best.

CLEAR PATH INTERNATIONAL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize the outstanding work of Clear Path International, a nongovernmental organization based in Dorset, VT. Since 2000, they have worked to locate and remove landmines and other unexploded ordnance in Vietnam, Cambodia, and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, and more recently have focused on helping the innocent victims of these indiscriminate weapons with medical, rehabilitation, and vocational assistance. As someone who has fought for years to rid the world of landmines, I am proud that Clear Path is based in my home State.

Clear Path recently expanded its work to Afghanistan. I ask unanimous consent that a September 15, 2007, article in the Rutland Herald about Clear Path's work be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Rutland Herald, Sept. 11, 2007]

CPI CONTINUING TO GROW ITS REPUTATION AS A FORCE FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

(By Patrick McArdle)

DORSET.—Clear Path International is continuing to grow its reputation as a force for humanitarian relief with new developments this year in Afghanistan and Slovenia.

For the first time, Clear Path is operating a program in Afghanistan in partnership with an American company and the Department of State.

Clear Path, which has offices in Dorset and Seattle, has also received a promise of almost a quarter million dollars from a non-profit organization in Slovenia which will allow it to continue and expand their work in Vietnam.

Martha Hathaway, the executive director of Clear Path, said it was important for the organization to get the kind of wider recognition that leads to expansions like the one it has recently undertaken.

But Hathaway is much more interested in talking about the work Clear Path is doing and the need in the countries it operates than in congratulating Clear Path on its efforts.

In Afghanistan, Clear Path will be creating victims' assistance programs which has been part of its mission for some time.

Hathaway founded Clear Path in 2001 with her husband, James, Kristen Leadem of Dorset, and Imbert Matthee of Washington, as a land mine removal organization. Now, the group works primarily in assisting victims and raising awareness.

In Afghanistan, Clear Path will be working as a subcontractor to DynCorp International which has a contract with the Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement. Hathaway said the Clear Path office in Kabul, which has been operating since April, is staffed partially by Americans, working to engage Afghans in the process.

The State Department is worried about projects that are not self-sustaining," Hathaway said.

Hathaway said because the government of Afghanistan already had a national strategy for helping victims of land mines, who not only have to deal with their injury but access issues and loss of income, Clear Path would look for ways the State Department can assist the local agencies. That is likely to include things like organizing a national workshop on victims' assistance or creating a system for building ramps and making schools accessible.

While Clear Path has already had some success with similar programs in Cambodia and along the Thailand-Burma border, Hathaway said that didn't necessarily make things easier when they expanded into a country like Afghanistan that has suffered greatly from the use of land mines.

"Every country impacted by land mines is different but we can take the bits and pieces of institutional knowledge we've gained over the years and apply it where it makes sense," she said.

According to Clear Path, an average of 90 people are injured by land mines or explosive remnants in Afghanistan every month and about half die before they can be treated.

The grant from the Slovenia-based International Trust for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance also presents new opportunities for Clear Path.

Under the agreement, the trust will raise \$230,000 from among its 27 government and private-sector donors to match what Clear Path raises from the United States government and donors.

Hathaway said this is the first time Clear Path has received funds from the trust and marks the trust's first efforts in Southeast Asia.

The trust was founded about 10 years ago to assist people in the Balkans but Hathaway said as land mines became less of a threat in Europe, charitable organizations there have begun to look at ways they can help victims in other places.

According to Hathaway, Clear Path will use the money to assist ongoing efforts in Vietnam through capital purchases and the hiring of new staff rather than to create new programs.

Despite Clear Path's successes, which have led to more contracts and funding, the need is still great and money remains an issue.

The problem of land mines, especially those which remain after a war is over and injure civilians, gained international attention more than 10 years ago through the support of several well-known figures, primarily England's Princess Diana.

Land mine removal is expensive, however, and organizations like Clear Path, which assist with rehabilitation and the development of resources so victims can earn their own living, are in it for the long-term.

"Donor fatigue is a real problem," Hathaway said.

While Clear Path is raising more money than it has in the past, it comes from fewer donors, primarily the large donations like